An Analysis of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategy

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Caveat

- *Opinions expressed in this presentation are my own and not the official position of the NATO Defense College, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the U.S. Army or the U.S. Government.*
- *This briefing is UNCLASSIFIED. All data are derived solely from Open Sources.*

What’s Going On Here?

Outline

- Context: The Bush Administration's Legacy
- Evolution of ISAF
- The Obama Administration's "Af-Pak" Strategy
- Challenges for ISAF

The Bush Administration's Legacy (1/4)

- 2001: Minimalism with a military focus.
- Task: "Overthrow the Taliban regime and deny al Qaeda its safe haven."
- Initial Campaign Strategy:
  - Oust the Taliban regime, not just hit al Qaeda.
  - Commit US ground forces.
  - Use indirect approach by supporting Afghan militias.
  - Rely on precision strikes.
  - Maintain small US footprint to avoid problems experiences by the Soviets and British.

The Bush Administration's Legacy (2/4)

- 2002: Strategy shifts to "…help the Afghan interim administration establish its authority."
- A "Marshall Plan" for Afghanistan. Help to:
  - Develop a stable Afghan government.
  - Train and develop Afghan national army.
  - Develop effective education system.
  - Develop economy.
- 2003: Funding for civilian development efforts doubled to $2 billion.

The Bush Administration's Legacy (3/4)

- 2006: Recognition of Pakistan's influence.
  - President Bush confers with Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf and Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai.
  - Enhanced Efforts to Develop Afghan National Army.
- 2007:
  - Engagement with "moderate" Taliban leaders under consideration.
  - Remote missile strikes into Pakistan.

The Bush Administration's Legacy (4/4)

- 2007: White House Statement of Goals: "America Has a Clear Goal in Afghanistan. **We will help the people of Afghanistan defeat the terrorists, and establish a stable, moderate, and democratic state that respects the rights of its citizens, governs its territory effectively, and is a reliable ally in the War on Terror.** The President is asking Congress for $11.8 Billion Over The Next Two Years To Help President Karzai Defeat Our Common Enemies And Help the Afghan People Build a Free and Successful Nation [and] ordered an increase in U.S. forces in Afghanistan…."

- 2008: Bush administration strategic review builds case for further troop increase but decisions placed on hold in deference to incoming Obama administration.

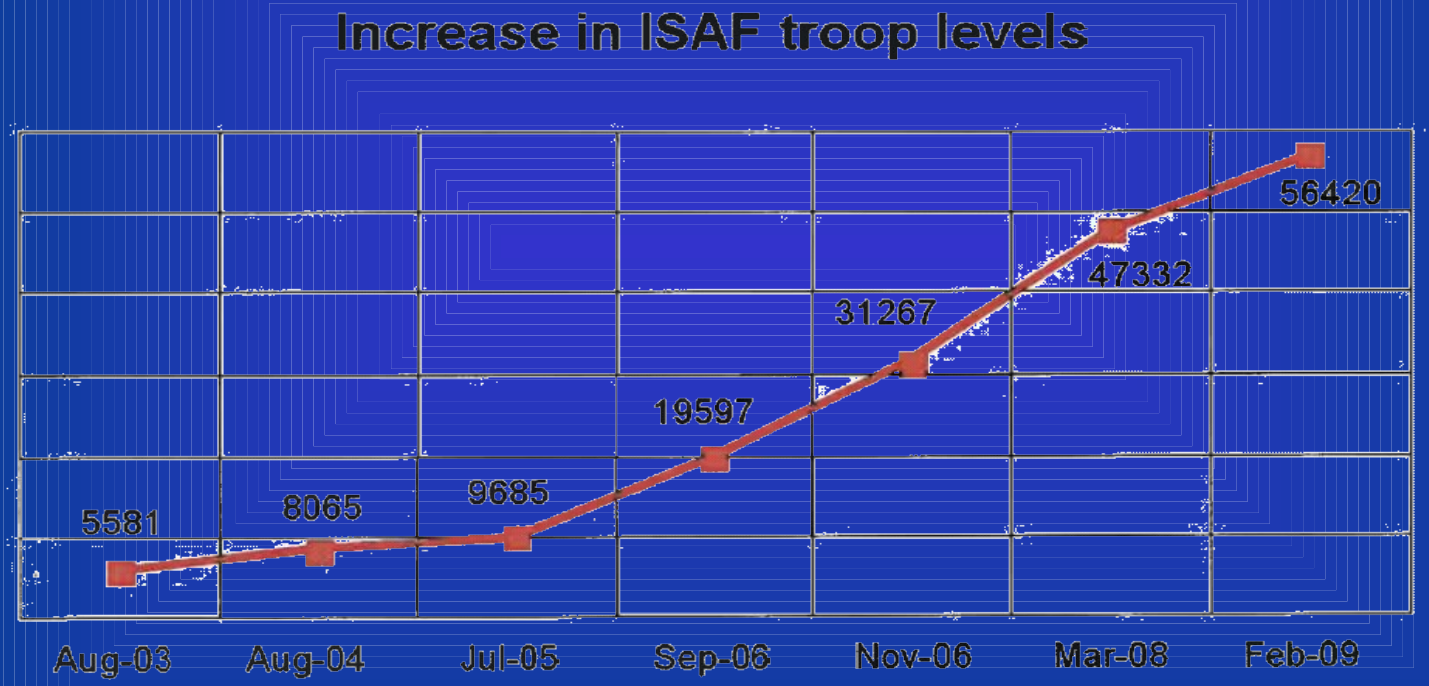
ISAF Evolution (1/2)

- December 2001: Created with UN Mandate following The Bonn Conference. Initially only to provide security in Kabul and surrounding areas.
- August 2003: NATO Assumes ISAF Leadership.
- October 2003: UN expands mandate to include all of Afghanistan.
- December 2003: Begins Stage One with one PRT in north (German-led in Kunduz) and adding five more in 2004.

ISAF Evolution (2/2)

- February 2005: Stage Two, NATO announces expansion to west for a total of nine PRTs.
- December 2005: Stage Three, expansion to south, to thirteen PRTs; also increases forces from approximately 10,000 to 20,000 troops.
- October 2006: Stage Four, expansion to east, takes responsibility for all of Afghanistan.

ISAF Troop Strength



Source: CSIS Burke Chair, “Developments in NATO and ISAF” Forces available from:
http://www.csis.org/images/stories/burke/090423_developments_nato-isaf_and_us_forces.pdf

Now, What's the Plan?

The Afghanistan-Pakistan "Af-Pak" Strategy (1/2)

Excepts from President Obama's Remarks:

"We are in Afghanistan to confront a common enemy that threatens the United States, our friends and allies, and the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan who have suffered the most at the hands of violent extremists. So I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal:

to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."

The Afghanistan-Pakistan "Af-Pak" Strategy (2/2)

President Obama's Remarks (continued):

- "The future of Afghanistan is inextricably linked to the future of its neighbor, Pakistan."
- "…we will shift the emphasis of our mission to training and increasing the size of Afghan security forces, so that they can eventually take the lead in securing their country."
- The military push must be joined by "a dramatic increase in our civilian effort….we need agricultural specialists and educators, engineers and lawyers."
- "From our partners and NATO allies, we seek not simply troops, but rather clearly defined capabilities: supporting the Afghan elections, training Afghan Security Forces, and a greater civilian commitment to the Afghan people."

"Af-Pak" Strategy Key Elements (1/2)

- Five Objectives:
  - Disrupting terrorist networks in Afghanistan and especially Pakistan to degrade any ability they have to plan and launch international terror attacks.
  - Promoting a more capable, accountable and effective government in Afghanistan.
  - Developing increasingly self-reliant Afghan security forces that can lead the counterinsurgency and counterterrorism fight.
  - Assisting efforts to enhance civilian control and stable constitutional government in Pakistan and a vibrant economy.
  - Involving the international community to actively assist.
- End State: "the removal of al Qaeda's sanctuary, effective democratic government control in Pakistan, and a self-reliant Afghanistan that will enable a withdrawal of combat forces while sustaining our commitment to political and economic development."

“Af-Pak” Strategy Key Elements (2/2)

- U.S. combat troops increased by 17,000 plus 4,000 additional trainers.
- Increase ANA to 134,000 and police to 82,000.
- Strengthen the relationship between the Afghan people and their government.
- Bolster the legitimacy of the Afghan government.
- Do everything necessary to ensure the security and legitimacy of voter registration, elections, and vote counting.

What is Different About Af-Pak? (1/2)

Margaret Warner: “And how is that different from what President Bush was trying to do?”

Ambassador Holbrooke: “It is an integrated policy. It's going to have far more resources, the president today announced hundreds of additional civilians. He mentioned agronomists and economists, were going to increase the agricultural effort. This is a rural country, but right now the U.S. mission in Kabul does not even have a really coherent, integrated agricultural-assistance program. We're going to make a much stronger effort to counter the propaganda of the Taliban and al-Qaida in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Kerry-Lugar bill is going to ask for much more money. We have way under-resourced this effort, and as you know, additional troops are on their way.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia/jan-june09/afghanpak_03-27.html

What is Different About Af-Pak? (2/2)

- Integration of Pakistan into the strategy.
- More resources.
- Better implementation?

“Af-Pak” Strategy Key Implications

- Statement of “core goal” as "disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda" gives impression of lowering the bar--easier to achieve than spreading democracy.

- Yet, close reading implies that implementing the strategy will require a full-scale counterinsurgency effort that includes:
  - Providing security for the Afghan population.
  - Increased economic development programs.
  - Improving the quality and effectiveness of the Afghan government at the national, regional, and local levels.

- Especially considering the deterioration of the security situation, the new strategy will very likely require greater levels of US and allied effort rather than less.

Summit Declaration on Afghanistan (1/2)

Strasbourg / Kehl, 4 April 2009, agreed to:

- Establish a NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan.
- Provide more trainers and mentors in support of Afghan National Police.
- Assist and support Afghan National Security Forces in support of upcoming elections.

Summit Declaration on Afghanistan (2/2)

- Provide operational mentoring and liaison teams to support enlargement of Afghan National Army.
- Encourage and support the strengthening of Afghan and Pakistani government cooperation.
- Further support the Government of Afghanistan and the UN in development of the Integrated Approach to strengthen synchronized civil-military efforts across Afghanistan.

ISAF Troop Contributions

(As of 1 October 2009)

Troop Contributing Nations (TCN): The ISAF mission consists of the following 42 nations (the troop numbers are based on broad contribution and do not reflect the exact numbers on the ground at any one time).

Albania	250	Finland	130	Lithuania	250	Spain	1000
Australia	1200	France	3070	Luxemburg	8	Sweden	430
Austria	4	Georgia	1	Netherlands	2160	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	186
Azerbaijan	90	Germany	4245	New Zealand	220	Turkey	820
Belgium	510	Greece	125	Norway	600	Ukraine	10
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	Hungary	310	Poland	2025	United Arab Emirates	25
Bulgaria	460	Iceland	8	Portugal	105	United Kingdom	9000
Canada	2830	Ireland	7	Romania	990	United States	31855
Croatia	290	Italy	2795	Singapore	2		
Czech Republic	340	Jordan	7	Slovakia	240		
Denmark	700	Latvia	165	Slovenia	80	Total (appx)	67700
Estonia	150						

* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

Source: http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.pdf

ISAF Areas of Responsibility
(As of 1 October 2009)

Key Facts:
- Commander: General (USA) Stanley A. McChrystal
- 42 Troop Contributing Nations
- ISAF Total Strength: approx 67,700
- ISAF AOR (Afghanistan land mass) 650,000 km²
- 26 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

Note on numbers: Totals are approximations and actual numbers change daily. Number of troops will never be exact and should be taken as indicatives.

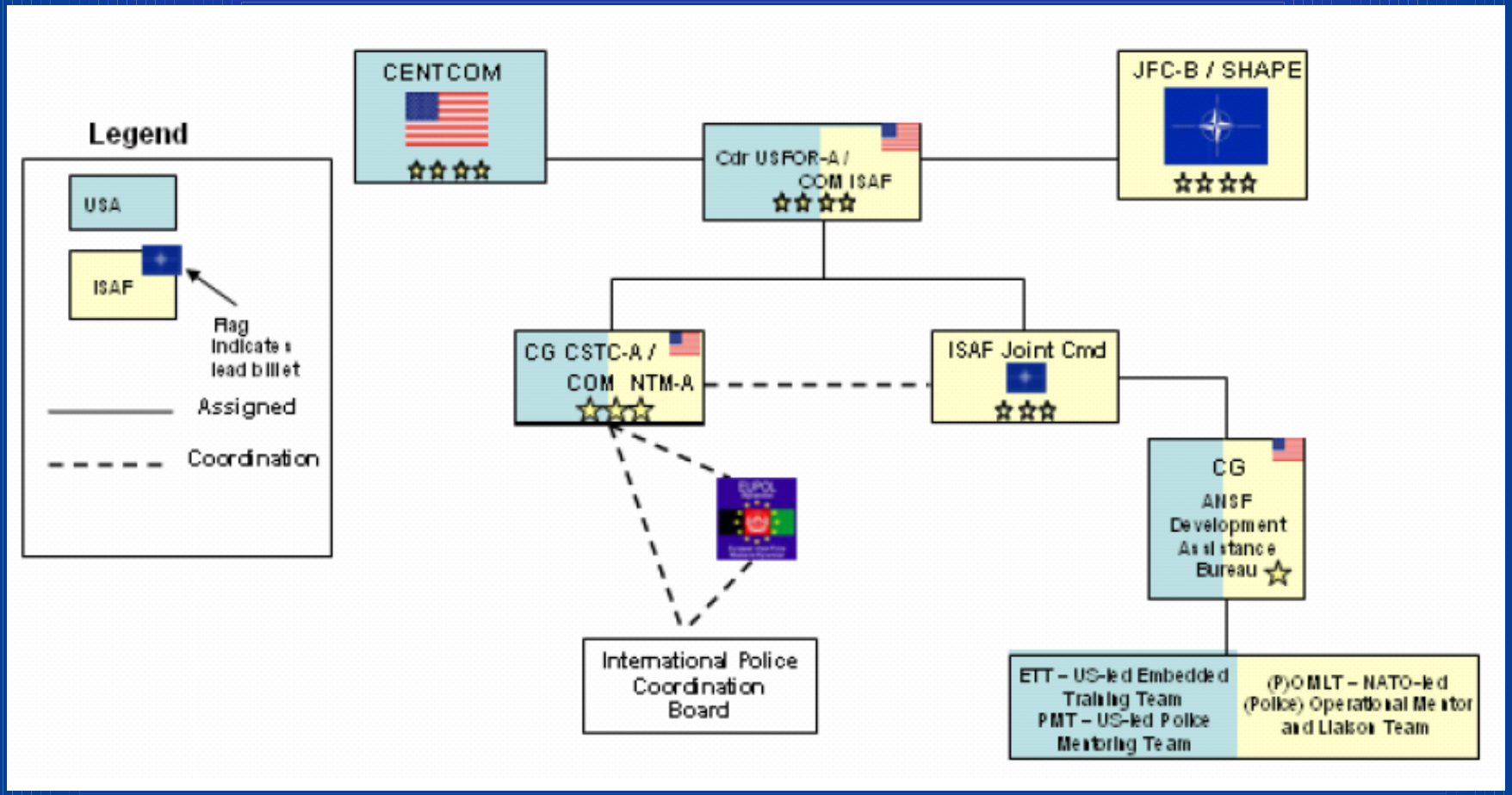
Source: http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.pdf

“COIN Math”

- Rule of thumb ratio of security force members to population (hotly disputed): 1 to 50.
- Iraq population 27.5 million = 550,000.
- “Surge”:
  - MNF-I = 169,000
  - Iraqi Security Forces ~440,000
  - “Sons of Iraq” ~92,000
  - Total ~ 700,000
- Afghanistan population 32 million = 640,000
  - ISAF + OEF = 101,000
  - Afghan National Army + Police = 171,000 (May 2009)
  - Afghan National Army + Police = 216,000 (2010)
  - Afghan National Army + Police = 400,000 (2013)*

* COA under consideration

NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan



Training Shortages

Figure 11–U.S. ETT Personnel Required and Assigned, October 2008 – May 2009

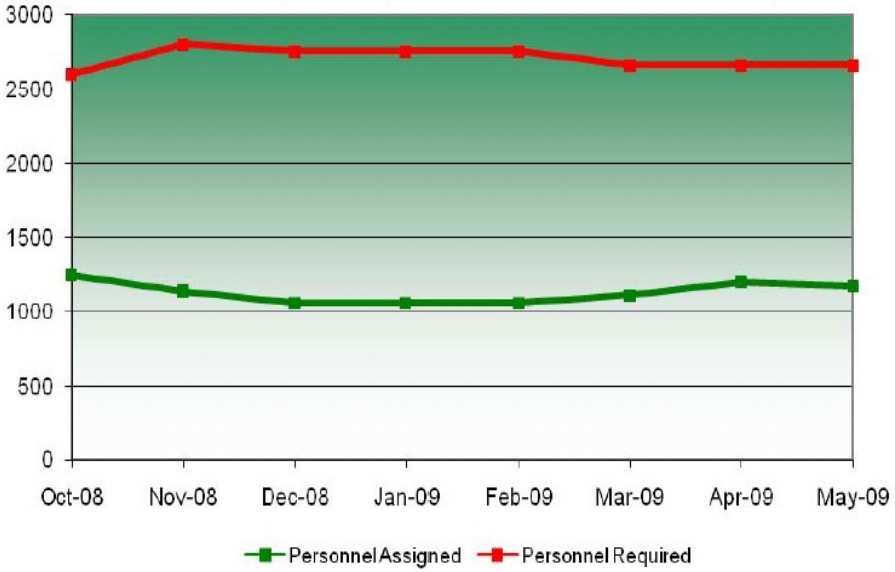


Figure 14– U.S. PMT Personnel; fielded and required; October 2008-May 2009

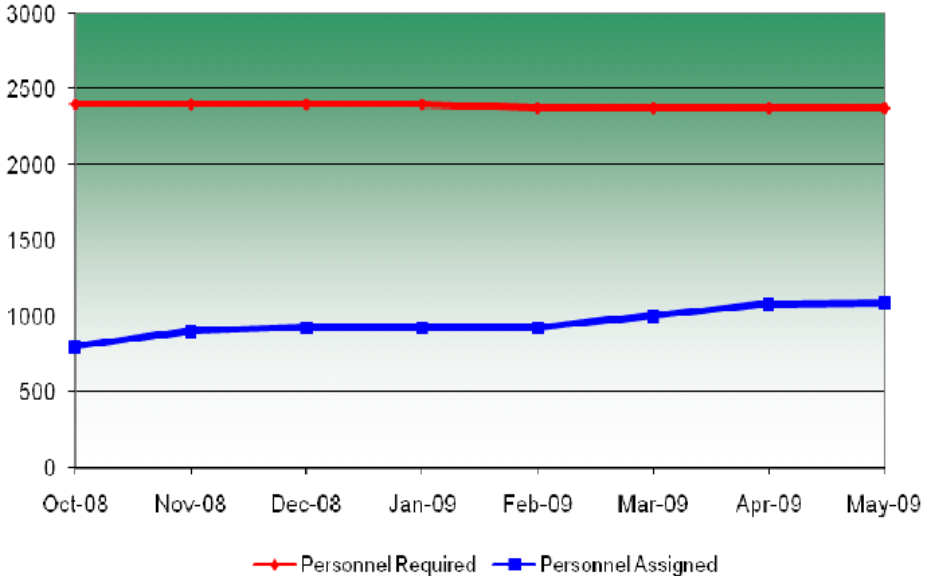
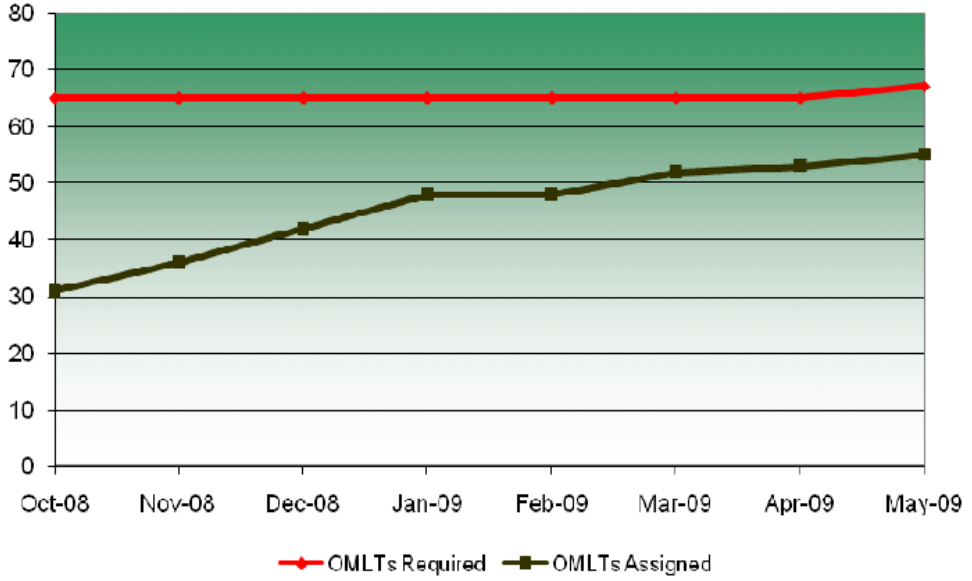


Figure 12 – ISAF OMLTs, October 2008 – May 2009



ANSF Challenges

DoD IG (30 Sep 09): Expansion of the ANSF beyond currently approved levels will face major challenges because of issues associated with:

- Insufficient ANSF leadership capability (specifically junior officers/non-commissioned officers [NCOs]),
- Shortages of certain lines of essential unit equipment (howitzers, mortars, communications, and engineer),
- Insufficient training facility capacity,
- Limited capacity to construct ANSF permanent bases/facilities “down-range,”
- Limited ANSF logistics capability lagging operational requirements, and
- Time necessary to develop ethical, competent leaders.

http://www.dodig.mil/SPO/Reports/SPO2009-007_final.pdf

Footnotes and Resources

"What NATO can learn from 'the surge' in Iraq" NDC Research Paper #40 http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=8

"NATO and the new US 'Af-Pak' Strategy" NDC Research Paper #51 http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=112

"Operationalizing a comprehensive approach in semi-permissive environments" NDC Forum Paper #9 http://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=79

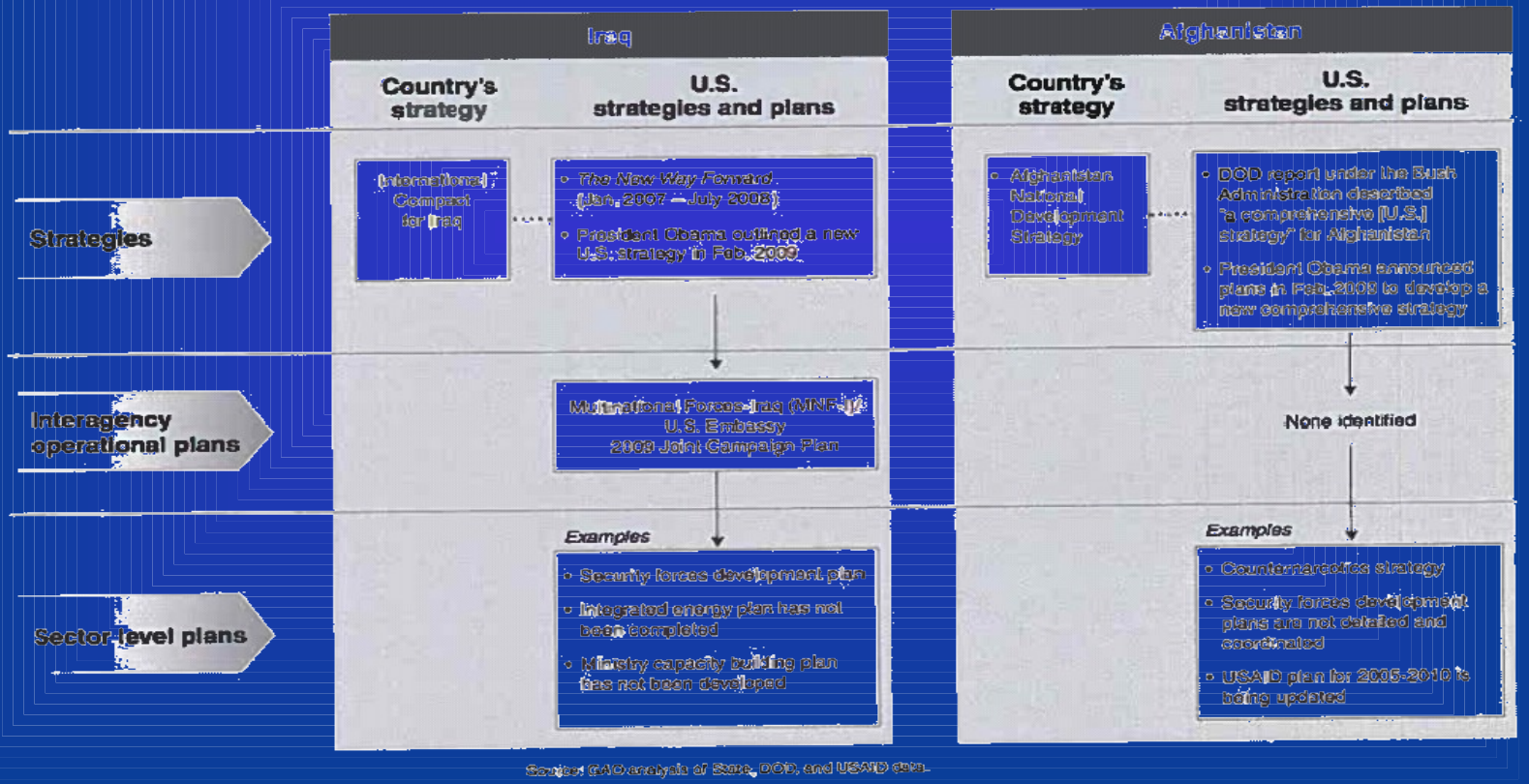
"Counterinsurgency: A challenge for NATO strategy and operations" NDC Forum Paper #11 (forthcoming) http://www.ndc.nato.int/research/series.php?icode=2

Questions?

Backup Slides

Af-Pak Strategy & Campaign Plan

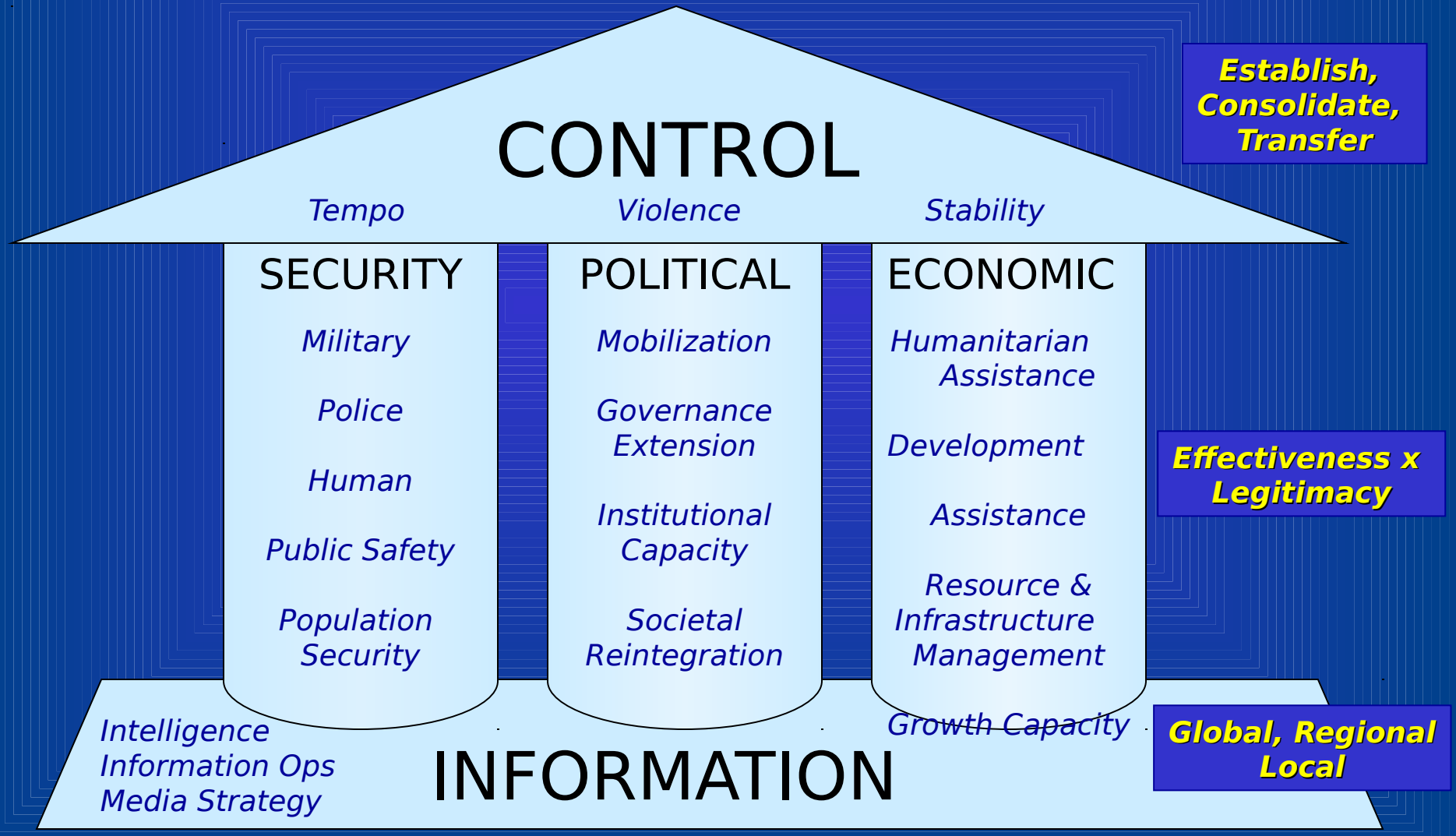
US Strategies and Plans for Iraq and Afghanistan


Iraq
Afghanistan
Country's strategy
U.S. strategies and plans
Country's strategy
U.S. strategies and plans
Strategies
International Compact for Iraq
The New Way Forward (Jan. 2007 – July 2008)
President Obama outlined a new U.S. strategy in Feb. 2009
Afghanistan National Development Strategy
DOD report under the Bush Administration described "a comprehensive [U.S.] strategy" for Afghanistan
President Obama announced plans in Feb. 2009 to develop a new comprehensive strategy
Interagency operational plans
Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I)/ U.S. Embassy 2008 Joint Campaign Plan
None identified
Sector-level plans
Examples
Security forces development plan
Integrated energy plan has not been completed
Ministry capacity building plan has not been developed
Examples
Counternarcotics strategy
Security forces development plans are not detailed and coordinated
USAID plan for 2005-2010 is being updated

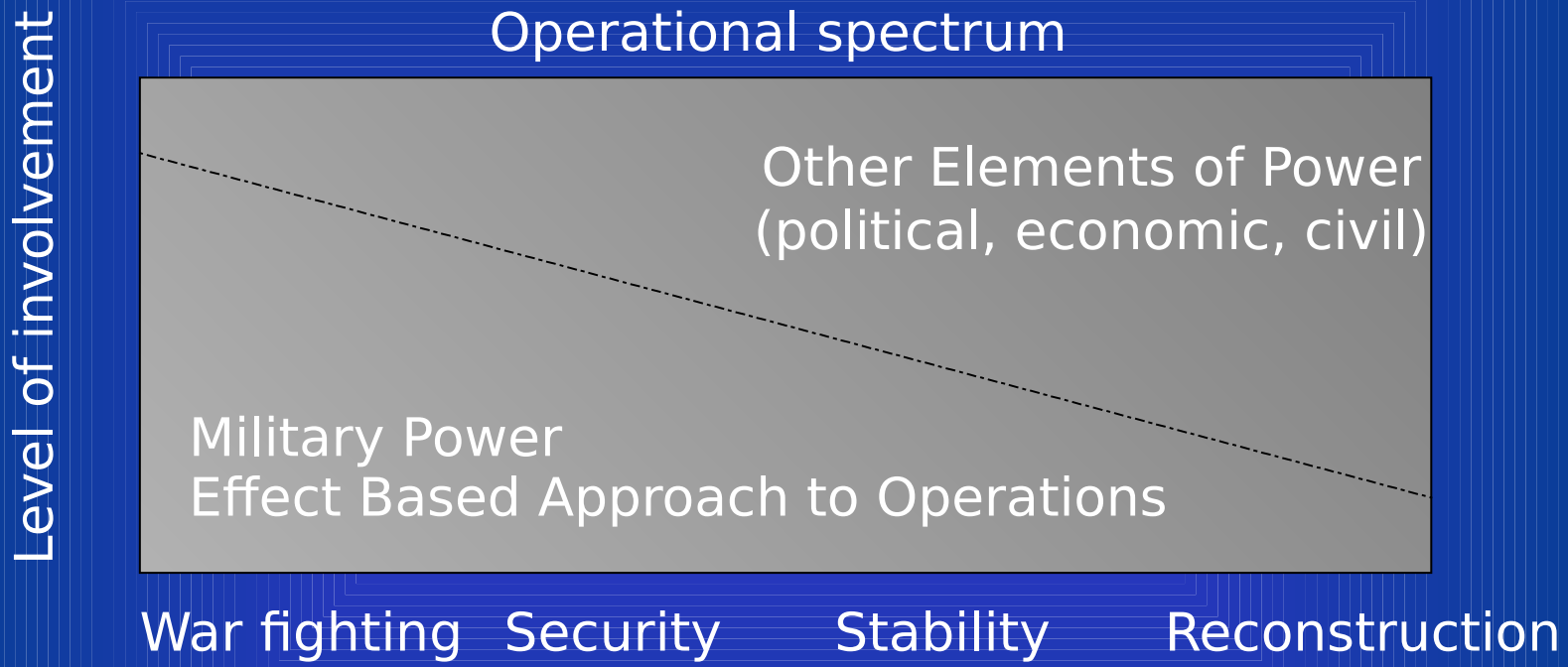
Source: GAO analysis of State, DOD, and USAID data.

GAO: "Iraq and Afghanistan, March 2009, GAO-09-476T, p.19.

Three Pillars of COIN

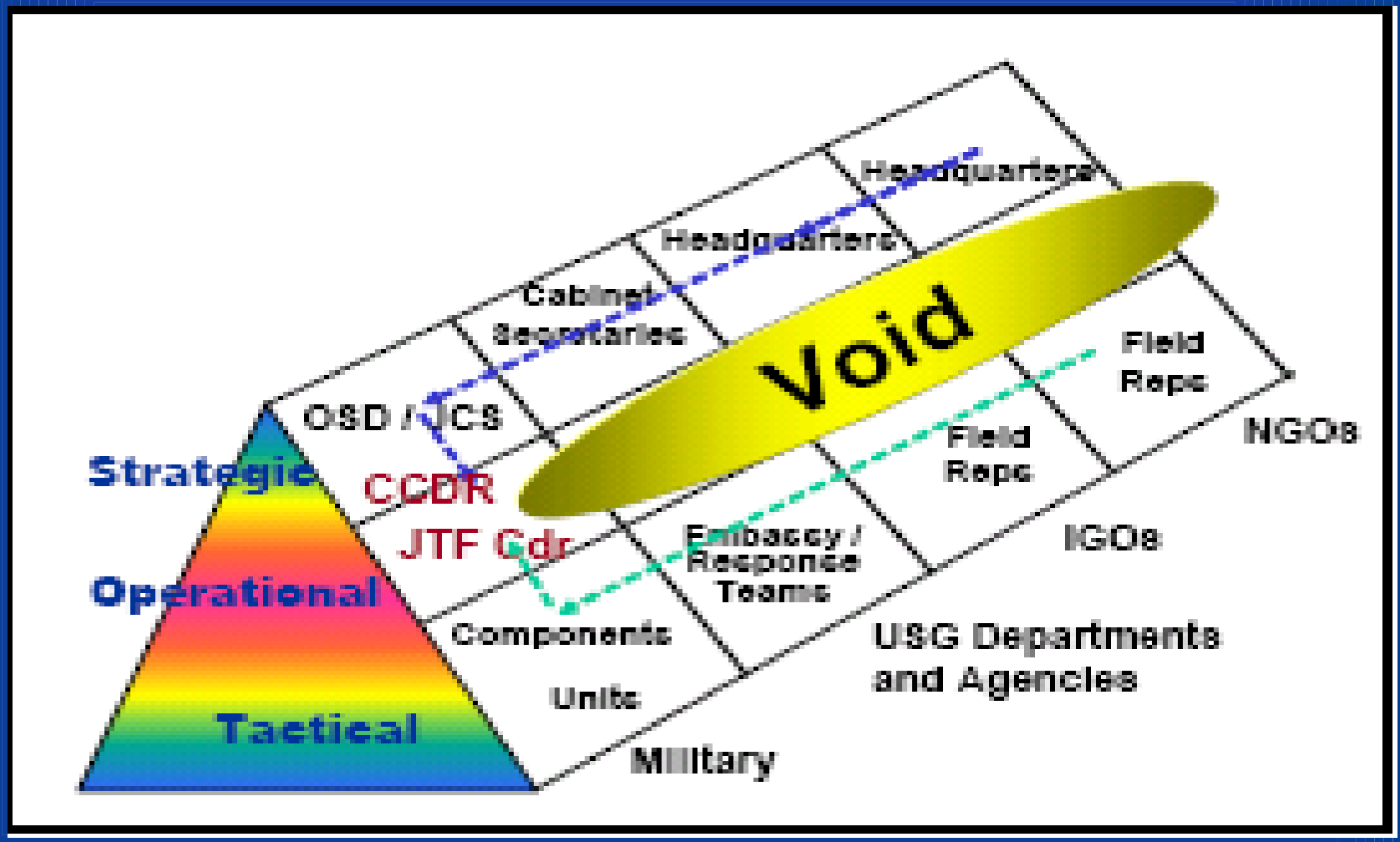


Comprehensive Approach: Challenges to Implementation

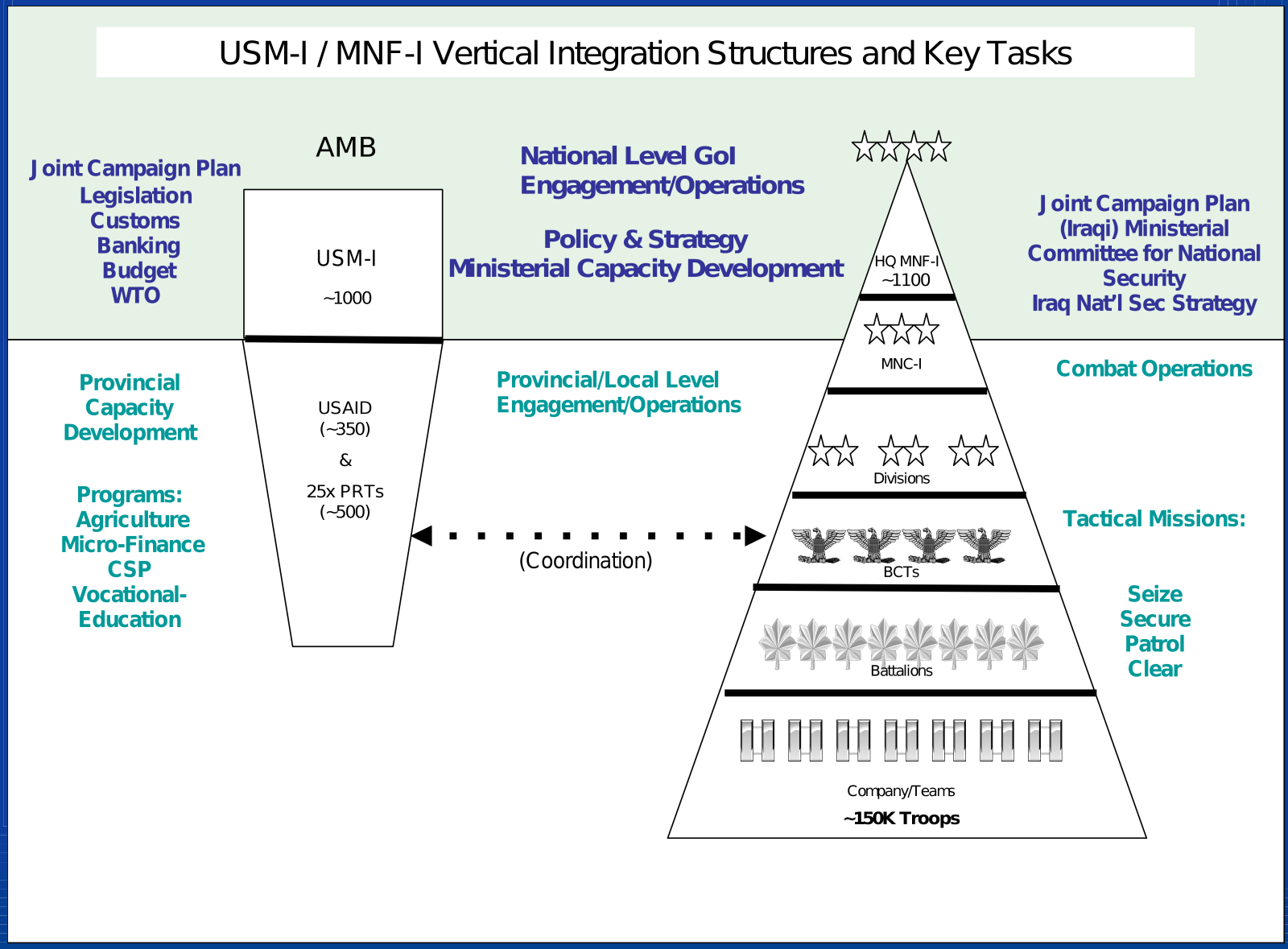


- ***Both military and non-military capabilities must be transformed***
- ***Lack of political will to fully embrace and agree on a concept***
- ***Military transformation focus on military effect in the new environment***
- ***Differences in deployable resources, cultures, and planning concepts***

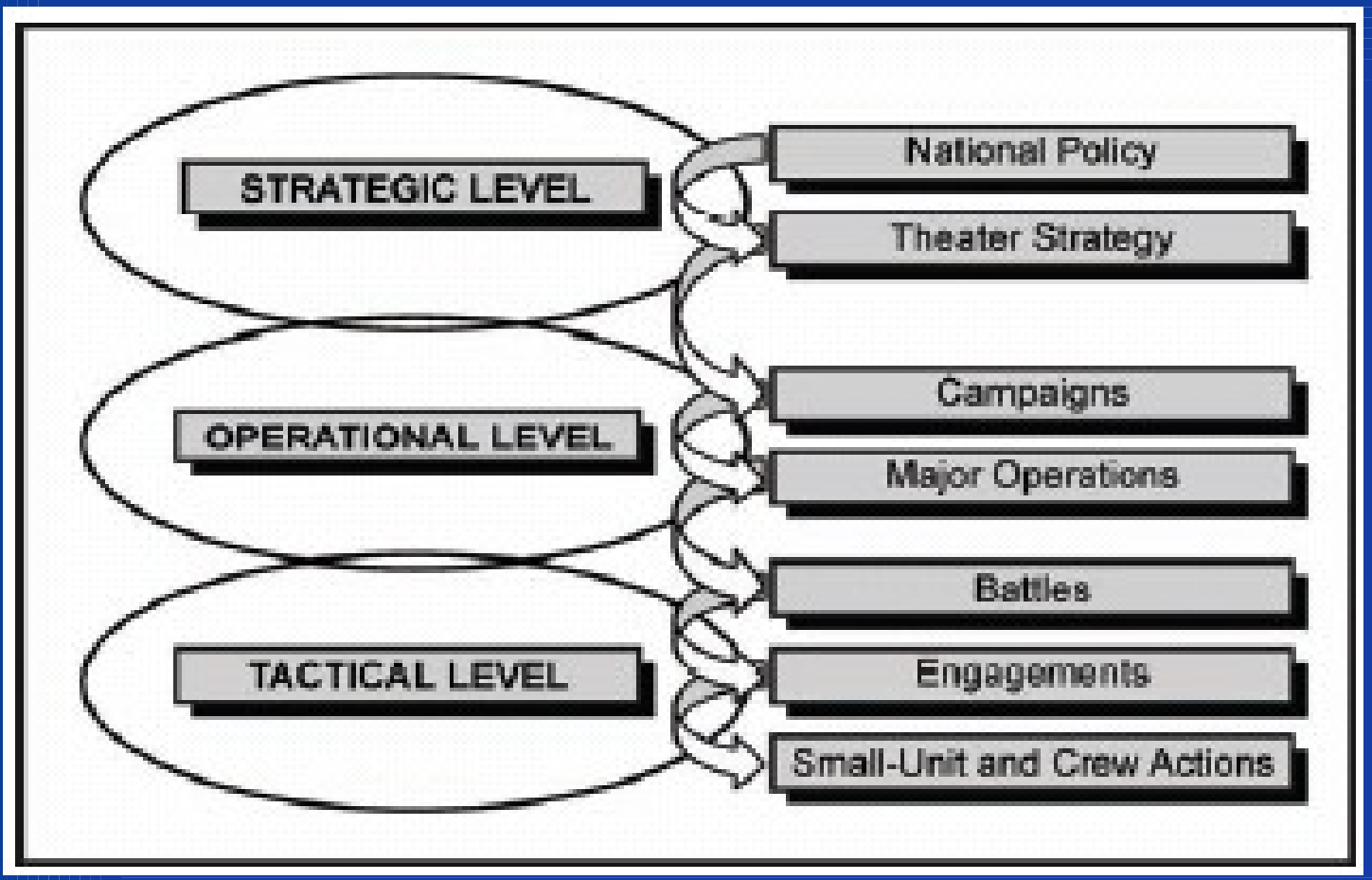
Civilian Planning Gaps



Comparison of Civilian and Military Structures



The Levels of War



Is “three levels of war” still a valid construct?

Strategic Compression

- Small unit/tactical actions can produce strategic effects
  - “Strategic Corporal”
  - “CNN Effect”
- Role of “Operational Art” as coordinating mechanism between strategic and tactical levels further blurs distinctions
  - “Operational Art” often required at battalion level in current operating environment
  - Need to empower small unit leaders
  - Centralizing at the higher echelon can give enemy the initiative